

THE LOON

Tim's Cove Property Owners Association

SPRING, 2002

ON THE ROAD AGAIN.....Gene Snyder

From what I've heard, Sebec Lake had a very mild winter, with the lake not freezing over until mid-January. I also understand there was some plowing on Sebec Shores Road. The roads were in good shape throughout last summer and into the Fall, mostly due to the lack of rain. A second grading was not done because the roads were too dry. 2001 was the driest year in 107 years, rainfall being off 13 inches for the year. The lake level was low all summer and got even lower in the Fall. We hope winter snowfall and spring rains will restore the lake level by Memorial Day.

We made several major improvements to our roads this past year which had been needed for sometime. The wooden bridge on South Cove Rd., which had been rebuilt twice in the last ten or so years and was in very bad shape, was replaced by a 6-foot diameter, forty-foot long culvert. Mac Drummond did an outstanding job of removing the old bridge and installing the new culvert. The second major accomplishment, which Mac also did, was the addition of two 4-foot diameter culverts to help carry the high water flows of Bennett Brook on Tim's Cove Rd. just past the "Y" turn. The area around the old single large culvert had overflowed and been repaired several times in past years at an expense of \$1400 plus and had left camp owners stranded several times. This improvement should end the need for repairs in that area.

In the spring/early summer of 2001 we spread gravel and graded Sebec Shores Rd. Fill was brought in to repair the large Spring washout in the Bennett Brook area. No work was done on South Cove Rd. during the Fall of 2000 and Spring of 2001 so that money could be set aside for use for bridge replacement. Summer pothole filling was done on Tim's Cove and South Cove Rds. See Paul Belmain's separate report re Fall roadwork. Over \$18,000 was spent on improving our roads in 2001 and it shows! This includes money from sources other than our road dues, and we would not have been able to accomplish all we did without this extra income.

As a result of Willimantic First Selectwoman Debbie Pettigrew's presentation on our taxes at our annual meeting, John Lowe conducted a very detailed study into how the Town assesses these taxes and how the Town operates. This research took considerable time and contains valuable information that we can all use. A copy of John's report is included in this year's Loon.

MEETINGS

ANNUAL MEETING - JULY 4TH - AT THE 'Y' - 10:00 A.M. (Please bring your own chairs.)

Directors Meeting - Monday, May 27 (Memorial Day) at Snyder's camp, 10:00 a.m. 164 South Cove Rd.
To review winter 2001/2002 road damage and plan 2002 road work.

THANK YOU TO ALL DUES PAYERS. 2001 WAS ANOTHER RECORD YEAR!

Tim's Cove Property Owners' Association - Report of the Treasurer
January 1, 2001 thru December 31, 2001

Balance as of December 31, 2000 (Checking Account) \$ 7,448.20

INCOME:

Dues	\$9,350.00	
Interest - Checking	\$ 48.33	
Town of Willimantic	\$3,000.00	
Interest - Certificate of Deposit	\$1,155.32	
Contributions for South Cove Culvert Replacement	\$ 1,550.00	
Garage Sale Proceeds	\$ 332.85	
Total Revenues:		\$15,436.50

DISBURSEMENTS:

Secretary of State (Annual Filing Fee)	\$ 120.00	
Jan Waterman (Postage, Printing)	\$ 145.57	
Drummond Construction - (Main Road-June)	\$1,500.00	
Drummond Construction - (Tim's Cove Road-June)	\$ 825.00	
Drummond Construction - South Cove Culvert	\$5,998.75	
Drummond Construction - (Main Road-Fall)	\$2,000.00	
Drummond Construction - (Tim's Cove Road)	\$4,200.00	
Drummond Construction - (South Cove Road)	\$2,000.00	
Penquis Surge - Gravel	\$ 380.00	
Postmaster - Postage	\$ 13.60	
Bank Fees	\$.44	
Total Disbursements		\$17,183.36
Balance as of December 31, 2001 (Checking Account)		\$ 5,701.34

Total Investments (CD as of 12/31/00)	\$33,762.51	
Increase in Principle (10% of Year 2000 Interest)	\$ 119.00	
Total Investments as of 12/31/01		\$33,881.51
Total Cash and Investments as of 12/31/01		<u>\$39,582.85</u>

Note 1: The following summarizes the South Cove Culvert Replacement Project:

2001 Culvert Replacement Donations	\$1,550.00	
Unused Balance of 2000 Lobster Party	\$ 519.50	
2000 Fall South Cove Road Work Deferred	\$1,500.00	
2001 Spring South Cove Road Work Deferred	\$1,500.00	
Total Cost of Replacement		\$5,998.75
Total "Net" Cost to Association		\$ 929.25

Note 2:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Dues Collected</u>
2001	\$9,350.00 (Excludes Culvert Replacement Donations)
2000	\$8,725.00
1999	\$7,225.00
1998	\$8,030.00
1997	\$7,200.00
1996	\$6,900.00
1995	\$5,850.00
1994	\$6,445.00

TO ALL WHO PAID DUES IN 2001 - THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING YOUR ASSOCIATION

ROAD DUES

We wish to say **"thank you"** once again to those of you listed below who paid your road dues for the year 2001. We set another new record, collecting \$9,350 last year. Your support enables us to continue making the improvements our roads need to be safe and dependable.

Adams, Bob & Isolda	Goodell, Barry & Jody	Penikas, Richard & Paula
Allen, Elizabeth	Goodwin, Jean (Hyvonen)	Perkins, Robert & Barbara
Anderson/Dickinson	Grant, Ralph	Plaia, Charles & Kathleen
Arsenault, Brian & Lynda	Gronberg, Chris & Kathy	Preston, Alan
Aten, Edward & Deirdre	Gronberg, Robert & Barbara	Rathbun, Larry & Jeanette
Barry Family	Guyotte, Joe & Bonnie	Rathbun, Robert
Belmain, Paul & Carol	Hartley, Ronald	Ring, Greg & Kathy
Bergeron, Steven	Hewitt, Vandy	Rollins, Steven
Blanchard, Mac & Dot	Hill, Dorothy & Jerry	Ruksznis, Clair
Bonsey, Ernest	Hilton, Scott	Rush, Don
Bonsey, Manley	Hooper, Ben	Ryan, David & Linda
Broadhead, Stephen	Hughes, Tammy & Greg Harmon	Sanderson, Robert
Canfield, Mark & Andrea	Hyvonen, Jon & Rebecca	Schweizer, Hubert & Priscilla
Casalli, Al & Marie	Inglehart, Dave & Donna	Seavey, Larry & Connie
Chandler, Robert	Jacobson, Ed & Dianne	Shaffner, Tom
Cinquimani, Sal	Jellison, Charles & Phyllis	Shields, James D. Jr.
Coleman, Kay Kelly	Kamys, Tim & Devora	Shields, James III & Donna
Coll, Louis & Edna	Kemp, Greg & Carol	Simpson Family
Cookson, Steve	Larrabee, Dr. Roland & Kathie	Smith, Vinal & Carol
Cote, Ken & Jean	Levasseur, Lois & Steven	Snyder, Gene & Elizabeth
Crepeau, Thomas & Sharon	Lowe, John	Stearns, Rollin
Dale, Steven	Martell, Greg	Therriault, William & Mary Ellen
Dever, Ben & Janine	Means, Paul & Rachel	Varnum, Robert & Ruth
Dodson, Kenneth	McGraw, Malcolm & Terri Lee	Vicari, Ken & Jean
Ehrlich, Paul	Mills, Dean & Cheryl	Waterman, Charlie & Jan
Erbe, Kurt & Shirley	Nicholas, Robert & Susan Pod	Weston, Don & Barbara
Fairbrother, Hoyt & Cheryle	Noble, Ralph & Maureen	Wilkinson, Charles & Winifred
Fischer, George & Peg	Orcutt, Amos (Univ. of ME)	
Fish Family	Page, Don & Elaine	
Flanders, Dale & Julia	Pearson, Lewis & Patricia	
Freeman, Arlan		

Our road dues for the year 2002 are \$100 and were voted on at the 2001 annual meeting. This amount is reviewed yearly by the Board of Directors and approved at the Annual Meeting. We would appreciate dues being paid as early as possible as it gives us the funds to make improvements earlier in the year.

Please make checks payable to: Tim's Cove Property Owners' Association.

Mail checks to: Ben Dever
31 Anderson Road
Dover-Foxcroft ME 04426

FALL 2001 ROAD WORK.....Paul Belmain

Tim's Cove Road - Two new 4-foot diameter culverts were placed into the roadway at the approach side of the existing Bennett Stream culvert. These two new culverts were positioned to serve as overflow culverts increasing the total water flow capacity. They are intended to be used in times of high water flow, thereby stopping the overflow from running up and over the top of the road and washing it out. The approach roadway was elevated and leveled in this area, along with the necessary cribbing and ditching to direct the water into and through these two new culverts.

South Cove Road - A new and longer culvert was placed just beyond Larry Cookson's camp. The prior deteriorated culvert was much too short and created a dangerous drop-off on the lake side of the road. The new culvert has moved this drop-off out to a much safer distance from the roadway. The uphill ditch beyond this culvert was redone down to the bend in the road to permit lower level runoff to flow down to the next culvert. An area adjacent to this new culvert was left flat to allow for 4-wheeler access to the back woods. If 4-wheelers are run directly thru muddy ditches, blockage of water flow results. A large boulder that was increasingly protruding up into the center of the road and presenting problems for low riding cars was removed and the road then filled in with gravel.

The ditch prior to the Belmain camp was re-done to improve drainage down to the existing culvert. Also, a pair of rotted yellow birch trees that were leaning over the road in this area were pushed over (this also improves the line of sight for vehicles). Finally, gravel was spread over the roadway in these two ditching areas, as well as over the top of the new 6-foot diameter culvert that replaced the bridge. An individual from Dover-Foxcroft carried away (at no expense to the Association) the massive steel beams removed from the discontinued bridge. Our thanks to Charlie Waterman for advertising and promoting the disposal of these beams.

Sebec Shores Road - The main intersection (where the annual meeting is held) was ditched and two new culverts installed to replace the two shorter and rotted ones. This area was not allowing water to drain away and in the springtime became a soft spot. A heavy layer of gravel was also spread over the road surface in this area. Several corners and blind spots leading up to this intersection were widened, this by pushing rocks and brush out of the way for improved visibility of vehicles. **Everyone is encouraged to work at removing brush and trees from corners and other blind spots along the roadway to improve safety for all.**

MAINE TURNPIKE WIDENING- Jan Waterman

This year begins the third year of the 5-year Maine Turnpike widening project, and work continues on schedule. This year's construction areas include in the southern portion a 3.7 mile area from Exit 2 in Wells to just short of Mile 22 in Kennebunk, and to the north, a 2.4 mile area between the Saco River crossing just beyond Exit 4 (Biddeford) and Exit 5 in Saco. In addition, 5 bridges will be under construction: one in Wells, two in Kennebunk, one in Biddeford and one in Saco. Be prepared to take it easy through these construction areas. And watch your speed - the fines are nasty!

INVASIVE AQUATIC PLANTS - Jan Waterman

Eurasian Milfoil and Water Chestnut are just two of the invasive aquatic plant infestations that have reached every New England state except Maine. Invasive plants "clog" lakes at depths of up to 20 feet, impairing or eliminating boating, recreation and fishing. There is no known cure, only expensive management by chemicals or in-lake harvesting at annual costs that can exceed \$1000 per acre. Boats are the primary means of spreading invasive aquatic plants. In June of 2001, the Maine Legislature passed an invasive aquatic plant law that will be attempting to prevent and eradicate any introduction of these plants into Maine lakes. The State will be establishing a system of border and launch site inspections to check boats and gear for plant fragments as well as establishing a statewide Task Force to oversee the preventative program. **Starting in January of 2002, boaters will be required to display an invasive plant sticker on motorized watercraft using Maine's lakes and inland rivers.** Stickers will cost \$10 for boats registered in Maine and \$20 for boats registered elsewhere. They will be valid for one year. **If you use your boat on lakes other than Sebec, or if you have guests bringing watercraft to the lake, be sure to inspect for plant fragments before launching.**

On Willimantic - John Lowe

My wife and I have been coming to Sebec Lake since 1960, and in all those years we have probably driven through the village of Willimantic no more than six times - on our way to Borestone or other hiking sites. Only paying taxes and purchasing our annual boat registration have brought me into mail contact with town officials, first Rex Turner and now Jacqueline Gorey. However, the issue of herbicidal spraying this past year brought me and my wife, together with other Sebec Shores people, to a town meeting where we met many more of the town's inhabitants and where I picked up a copy of the Willimantic Annual Report.

Reading this Report, and returning the next evening for a planning committee meeting where I could ask questions, has given me a much better understanding of the town and our relation to it. This is my effort to share some of my discoveries. Many of the details have been provided by Debbie Pettigrew, who is a Selectman and Assessor, and who kindly answered my questions over the course of several long telephone conversations.

Willimantic is a rectangular town, six and a quarter miles by eight miles, or 50 square miles in area (32,000 acres). Sebec Lake looks to me to take up about 4000 acres in Willimantic, leaving roughly 28,000 acres of land. Of this, 22,000 acres is owned by International Paper (IP) for tree growth. Living on the remaining 6000 acres of the town are two significant populations: permanent residents, and a seasonal population. The 2000 census counted 135 permanent residents, living in 55 housing units. The census doesn't count seasonal visitors, but does count the camps they use. There are 155 of these in Willimantic, mostly on the shores of Sebec Lake and Buck's Cove. I inquired about the livelihoods of the permanent residents, and the guesses I heard were that forest and mill work figure prominently but that a significant number of the residents are retired. (About 25% of them are over 60 years of age.) There is only one farm.

It is interesting to see what the town spends each year and from where its income is derived. I have budget figures for several years, and I think it will be easier to follow if I massage the data to give typical but rounded values.

Willimantic spends around \$300,000 in a typical year. About \$100,000 of this comes from sources other than property taxes. The major ones are:

- > Excise taxes (\$20-25,000). These are mostly from annual licensing of cars or trucks by residents, and also from boat licenses. Trucks pay impressively large amounts - up to \$1000 and sometimes even more.
- > Local road assistance (\$20,000) from the State.
- > Tree growth (\$24,000 last year, but highly variable). More about this later.
- > State revenue sharing (\$5000).
- > Education subsidy (\$5000).
- > Interest income (\$10,000). Money isn't spent the moment it's received, and some is accumulated for special projects.
- > Various little sources (\$6000).

Property taxes account for an amount in the ballpark of \$200,000. This is a highly variable number. Taxes collected for the year ending June 30, 2001 totaled \$230,000, and the total planned for the year ending June 30, 2002 is about \$160,000. This number is targeted in advance based on anticipated expenses. The real estate valuation for the entire town is about 19 million dollars, and a rate of 8.40 mils will be used this year. (That's \$8.40 for each \$1000 assessed value.)

The three major categories of real estate in Willimantic are:

- > Lake shore properties: Approx. 200 acres. Valuation: \$12-13 million. Tax expected 2001-2002: \$110,000.
- > International Paper land. Approx. 22,000 acres. Valuation (see below). Tax expected 2001-2002: Unknown. Set by State. Last year it was about \$30,000.
- > Private property not on Sebec Lake: Approx 5800 acres. Valuation approximately \$3 million. Tax expected 2001-2002: Roughly \$30,000.

I should mention here that, unlike some other states, Maine requires that valuations be as close as possible to actual market values. Maine has rather precise rules for valuation, and the Willimantic assessors (currently Debbie Pettigrew, Bruce Thomas and Daniel Tourtelotte) are trained by the State.

So far, we have accounted for roughly \$300,000 of income. Some years there are significant costs for special projects. Paving the single road that runs through the heart of town is an example. That can cost more than \$50,000 but only happens once every eight years or so. The Town builds up a reserve fund and then uses it for such pre-targeted projects.

Real Estate taxes from the IP land are determined by the State of Maine on a county-by-county basis. The rate depends on paper prices, mix of hardwoods and softwoods, and probably other variables that affect the profitability of the industry. Willimantic, however, can count on about \$55,000 from the IP acreage. If the State sets the tax rate so that IP pays, say, \$25,000, then the State pays the Town \$30,000 to make up for the loss. This is the item called "tree growth" in the list above.

The effective "tax" of \$55,000 for IP comes to about \$2.50 per acre. This amounts to an effective valuation of about \$250 per acre. I thought this to be unreasonably low. I had been told that forest land around here costs about \$600 per acre. However, Debbie Pettigrew tells me that there have been a couple of recent sales of large tracts in Willimantic for about \$100 per acre.

Values for non-lakefront properties are calculated as follows: If a property is "developed" (i.e., has a house on it), then the first five acres constitute a "homestead" lot, valued at \$7,000. Any additional acreage is valued at \$250 per acre. The value of the house is added to this. So, a house with valuation of \$30,000 sitting on 20 acres, has a total valuation of \$40,750 (\$30,000 + 15 times \$250) and would pay a tax of \$342 this year. But not all of that tax would actually be paid by the homeowner. Maine has a recent "homestead" law that "forgives" a permanent resident \$7,000 on their valuation. The tax is not lost to the Town, though. The State pays it. So the above example would end up valued at \$33,750 and would lead to a tax of \$284 on the homeowner, with the State then kicking in an additional \$59. If we take 55 year-round non-lake houses times the \$7000 homestead valuation, we get \$385,000 and use up 275 acres. That leaves about 5500 acres. At \$250 per acre, that's worth about \$1.4 million. Add the homesteads and we have about \$1.8 million for valuation of the land (excluding buildings). Debbie estimates that the average valuation of these houses is about \$30,000. For 55 houses, that's \$1.6 million for the buildings, leading to a total real estate valuation estimate for off-lakeshore, non-IP land of \$3.4 million. Given all the uncertainties of these rough estimates, I think this is in reasonable agreement with the \$3 million that I estimated earlier.

I will return to the complicated but interesting manner in which real estate is evaluated later in this account.

How is this money spent? Here are the main expenses for '99-'00.

- > General Government: \$23,400
(70% is for salaries/expenses for tax collector, town officers, school board members, election officers, code enforcers. The rest is for auditor, dues, training, computer and programming, electricity, heat, supplies, etc.)
- > Protection: \$11,200
(Roughly half is for the Monson Fire Department and half for Town insurance.)
- > Health and Sanitation: \$24,000.
(This is to pay for the dump. Most of this involves cost of transfer of materials to Bangor.)
- > Public works: \$144,300.
(This appears to be mostly road plowing, maintenance, and paving.)
- > County tax: \$28,100.
(The Town has to pay a tax to Piscataquis County. It is based on the Town valuation, and pays for Sheriff, courts, Register of Deeds, etc.)
- > Education: \$134,685.
(Willimantic has no schools, hence must pay tuition, administrative costs, and transportation expenses for sending students to schools in other town. This figure from '99-'00 dropped to \$121,900 last year and is expected to be \$87,100 for '01-'02 (for 23 students). These figures are slightly less than actual expenditures due to a State allocation of about \$5000 (total - not per child). In essence, it costs Willimantic nearly \$4000 per year for each child in school.)

The sum of these expenditures is \$376,885. This happened to be a year where public works (mainly road improvements) were high. About \$100,000 was taken from the reserve fund.

The big costs are Public Works and Education. The Town has some control over the former, and can accumulate funds to meet foreseen needs. Education can be problematic. If families with school-age children move into Willimantic, it immediately bumps up this expense.

The calculation of building and land values is much more involved than I had imagined. Buildings are evaluated using criteria that do not include location. The assessors rate each building (including garages, sheds, decks and barns) on ten factors. These are: foundations and bases (basement, masonry, pilings), interior (how finished, insulated), exterior (siding material, quality of windows), framing, roof material, floors, plumbing (number of bathrooms), heat (furnace, woodstove), electric (50 amps, 100 amps, 100 amps plus generator). Each factor is scored from 1 to 5 (1 at the low end), and an average score is computed. This average is then multiplied by the square footage of the building's footprint. Then this number is used with a State-supplied table to give a value. Finally, depreciation and obsolescence factors are considered. Depreciation is really a matter of what shape a building is in, rather than its age. Most of the camps in Sebec Shores are depreciated 15 to 20%.

Obsolescence refers to a building that can't be used for its intended purpose. For instance, a non-farmer may live on what used to be a farm, and may use the barn for a garage. Rather than taxing it as a barn, which would likely cause the owner to tear it down, the assessors would probably evaluate it at a lower value, consistent with what is typical for a garage.

Most of the building values listed for the lakeside properties in Willimantic fall between \$20,000 and \$40,000. The highest value is \$86,000. The total building valuation for the 117 developed properties on the lake is \$3,939,100, giving an average building valuation of \$33,700.

The total land valuation for 145 lakeshore properties is \$8,734,900, for an average of about \$60,000. There are big variations here. Undeveloped land is evaluated at \$200 per foot of lakefront, and developed land is \$400 per foot. However, this is only the beginning of a calculation that can be rather complicated. Let's start with the simplest cases.

Example 1. A developed lot has 150 feet of shorefront, and a building evaluated at \$33,000. Total land area is 0.95 acres. Total valuation is \$93,000 (\$400 times 150=\$60,000, and then add the \$33,000.) Taxed at 8.40 mils, this yields \$781. (I will use the current rate of 8.40 mils in all the cases.)

Example 2. The same lot with no buildings (undeveloped). Total valuation is \$30,000. (\$200 times 150). The tax would be \$252.

Now an additional wrinkle: Suppose someone has a very deep lot. They might have the same lake frontage as the above cases, but twice the acreage. It seems logical that they should have a higher valuation - and it turns out they do. The assessors in Willimantic estimate that one normal lot on the lakeshore should have an area of no more than 1.1 acres. Any land beyond this is valued at \$10,000 per acre.

Example 3. Same as example 1 except now the area is 1.5 acres. That's 0.40 "excess acres" giving an additional \$4,000 to the valuation. New total is \$97,000, and new tax is \$815.

Another wrinkle: Some lots have frontage that is not all very usable. Examples are marshy spots, like down in Bennett Cove. The assessors give such properties a lower valuation to account for the presumably lower market value of such a lot.

If you own two or more lots in Sebec Shores, another important factor comes into play. It turns out that the rate per foot of frontage comes down once a lot exceeds 250 feet of frontage. Here's how it is calculated. If the frontage is over 250 feet, then the first 250 feet is reduced to 88% of its "normal" value. The next 250 feet is reduced to 50% of its normal value, and anything beyond 500 feet is reduced to 35% of its normal value.

Example 4. Four adjacent undeveloped lots each have 150 feet of shoreline, and each have an area of 1.1 acres. Treated separately, the valuation is \$30,000 per lot, or \$120,000, and the tax is \$1008. Treated as a single property, we get:

First 250 feet: $\$200 \times 250 \times 0.88 = \$44,000$

Second 250 feet: $\$200 \times 250 \times 0.50 = \$25,000$

Last 100 feet: $\$200 \times 100 \times 0.35 = \$7,000$

Total so far: \$76,000. That looks a lot better than \$120,000.

But there is a penalty. Since one lot is allowed only 1.1 acres, and we have a total of 4.4 acres, there is excess acreage of 3.3 acres, adding \$33,000 to the valuation. New total: \$109,000. That's still better than \$120,000. Tax becomes \$916, for a savings of \$92 over the tax of four separate lots.

If you own two lots, and one is developed, it might pay to have them treated as two lots. Here are the two options, assuming each lot has 150 feet of frontage and an area of 1.1 acres.

Example 5.

Treated as two separate lots.

The developed lot. $\$400 \times 150 = \$60,000$

The undeveloped lot. $\$30,000$

Total for the land = $\$90,000$.

Treated as one lot. The assessors treat it as a big DEVELOPED lot with 300 feet of frontage and an area of 2.2 acres.

First 250 feet: $\$400 \times 250 \times 0.88 = \$88,000$

Remaining 50 feet: $\$400 \times 50 \times 0.50 = \$10,000$

Excess acreage of 1.1 acres = $\$11,000$

Total: $\$109,000$.

The valuation rate per developed lakefront foot rose from \$250 to \$400 this year, and this has had the effect of magnifying the difference between the two options just illustrated. If you have two or more lots, some developed and some undeveloped, it would be wise to verify that the best choice has been made on your behalf by the assessors. Debbie Pettigrew is aware of this subtlety and is rechecking the recent revisions. To run your own calculation, you would need to get from her your actual, measured front footages, your acreage values, and the valuation of your buildings. She can be reached at (207) 997-2073 or at debbiep@midmaine.com

It is remarkable that approximately half of the real estate tax for the Town comes from less than 1% of the land. Because of lakeshore property values, Willimantic is rated as a rather rich town in comparison with some others in Piscataquis County. For that reason, the State provides a comparatively small sum for support of education, and the County taxes the Town relatively heavily. This means that both the State and the County take a lively interest in Willimantic's keeping their valuations up with market values. State pressure led to the recent rise in valuation of developed lakefront footage. My perusal of real estate ads supports the resulting valuations. A developed lot with a nice camp on it really does sell for around \$100,000 (sometimes a lot more), and that's roughly where the above formulas would put it. Properties in off-lake places are much less valuable. When you turn off of Sebec Shores road onto Wharff Road on your way in to Dover-Foxcroft, notice one of the first little houses on your left (reddish, with a white door). It has been for sale for awhile. It comes with 75 acres of land, and they are asking \$45,000. Think about what 75 acres stretched out along the lakeshore would be worth.

The bottom line is that I think the assessors are doing a conscientious job of trying to follow the State's complex formulas, and that the Town of Willimantic is spending the money they collect in a responsible manner. There are legal constraints on their ability to fund non-public works (such as private roads). It is understandable that we chafe at getting back so little, but I don't think the Town officers have a lot of room for maneuver.

SPECIAL THANKS

To Tom Shaffner for his unsolicited contribution of \$500 for gravel on Sebec Shores Road.

To the 16 camp owners on South Cove Rd. who contributed an extra \$100 toward the new culvert to replace the bridge.

To Charlie Waterman for finding a way to get the steel beams left over from the bridge demolition removed without cost to the Association.

To the camp owners who donated, collected and sold goods as part of the town of Willimantic tag sale. \$332 was raised by their efforts.

To the Penikas/Hunt and Goodwin/Hyvonen camps for holding the yearly lobster party and pig roast which together raised \$950 for additional fall road work on South Cove Road.

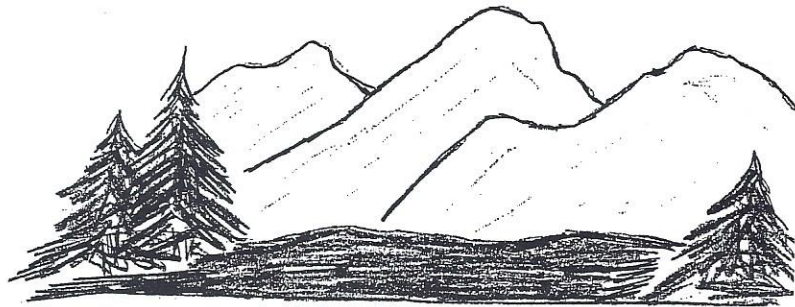
To Andrea Canfield for her work to put together a camp owner address/phone list. This list will be available at the Annual Meeting.

To John Lowe for his extensive research and documentation into how our town of Willimantic operates, collects and uses our tax money within the constraints of the State of Maine tax laws.

To the participants of the various pothole and brush clearing parties on our roads.

To all those camp owners who paid their road dues for the year 2001. We hope you will continue in 2002!

To the Town of Willimantic for the \$3000 they provided for our road maintenance.



TAKE A HIKE - Dot Blanchard

It's time to get out the hiking boots and daypacks again and head for the high country. By the time we all get to camp the trails should have dried out and we can look forward to another season of fun (and good exercise!).

Chairback Mountain at 2219 ft. is an interesting hike on the Appalachian Trail just south of the Gulf Hagas area. It's not difficult, but it is long - 8 miles round-trip. From Sebec Lake plan on an all-day trip. Drive to Katahdin Iron Works (turn left off Rt. 11, 5.5 miles north of Brownville Junction.) and follow the gravel road to the gate where you must register and pay a fee. This area is managed by the North Maine Woods. Cross the bridge, turn right and follow the paper company road. At about 3 mi. take the left fork (the road on the right leads to White Cap Mtn. and Gulf Hagas). At 6.7 mi. from K.I., park in the AT parking lot. A short connecting trail to the AT leaves at the corner of the parking lot and descends 0.2 mi. to the West Branch of the Pleasant River. Hike south on the AT, which soon crosses the gravel road you came in on and rises through mixed hardwoods to the top of a spruce-covered ridge at 1.7 miles. Here, on beautiful moss-covered ledges a 0.2 mi. side trail leads to East Chairback Pond where there are good views of Chairback and Columbus Mountains. At 3.5 mi. the trail comes out onto open ledges with views of the cliffs - the chair of Chairback Mt. Soon after, you are at the base of the jumble of boulders which leads to the summit. This is the most interesting and difficult part of the hike, but it is short, just 0.1 mi. The view at the summit is 360 degrees. North is the White Cap Range, west is Greenville and Moosehead, south you can see a bit of Sebec Lake, and east is the flat lake country stretching toward the New Brunswick border. It's a great place to relax before you head down. I climbed here the last week of September, 2001 with a group of friends, and we all agreed it was a perfect choice for a fall foliage hike. Happy hiking!

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ANNUAL MEETING AT THE "Y" - JULY 4TH - 10:00 A.M.